

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. WOOLSEY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING REVEREND DR. STAN BALLARD

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. CRAWFORD) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to introduce our guest pastor this morning, Dr. Stan Ballard.

For the past 30 years, Brother Stan has pastored numerous congregations, and today he serves as a pastor of my family's church, Nettleton Baptist in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

Brother Stan is a native Mississippian and earned his undergraduate degree from Mississippi State University. After graduating from Mississippi State, he earned a bachelor's degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans and a doctorate degree from Luther Rice Theological Seminary in Atlanta. During his career in ministry, Brother Stan has pastored churches in Louisiana, Mississippi, Ohio, and Arkansas.

The pride and joy of Brother Stan's life are his wife, Beth, and their children and grandchildren. During their 42 years of marriage, Stan and Beth have been blessed with three sons and, more recently, four grandchildren.

On a personal level, I can say that Brother Stan has been a constant source of support and guidance for the entire Nettleton Baptist congregation. Any time a member of our congregation is in need, we can rely on Brother Stan.

It's an honor to introduce Pastor Stan Ballard and welcome him to the U.S. House of Representatives.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). The Chair will entertain 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SEQUESTRATION

(Mr. HECK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HECK. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today to call on the administration to inform the American people how they intend to implement the sequester cuts mandated by the Budget Control Act. With the failure of the supercommittee, we now face defense

cuts that everyone agrees are far too steep. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta has said that cutting military spending by an additional \$500 billion "would do real damage to our security, our troops and their families, and our military's ability to protect the Nation."

Cuts of this nature would result in us having the smallest ground force since World War II, the smallest Navy since World War I, and the smallest tactical Air Force since the Air Force was created in 1948.

Independent economists have testified before the House Armed Services Committee that these cuts will cause massive job losses, including as many as 4,000 in my State of Nevada, which already suffers from the highest unemployment rate in the Nation.

The House has passed a plan to replace these devastating cuts, maintain national security, and prevent job losses. Today, I urge the administration to outline its plan for addressing this situation.

INTERNATIONAL AIDS CONFERENCE

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the International AIDS Conference that will bring 25,000 men and women to Washington, D.C., next week.

As a country, we've made incredible strides in the three decades since the first cases of HIV/AIDS were identified in the United States.

In the 1980s, after Ryan White, a teenager living in Indiana, acquired the disease through a blood transfusion, his family had to fight their local school board that feared he might infect his classmates simply by showing up for school.

Today, men, women, and children with HIV are living longer, more fulfilling lives due to advances in treatment and a better understanding of the disease. And just this week, the FDA approved the first pill designed to help prevent healthy people from acquiring the virus.

But even today, HIV/AIDS is still an epidemic that primarily afflicts our poorest and most vulnerable citizens across the world and even here in the United States. We must continue to work with advocates like those attending next week's conference so that one day we can finally eradicate HIV/AIDS.

In Rhode Island, EpiVax, under the leadership of Dr. Annie DeGroot, is working to develop a globally accessible vaccine, and I wish them great success in their important work.

THE DAMAGING EFFECTS OF DEFENSE CUTS

(Mr. PALAZZO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PALAZZO. Madam Speaker, I come before you today not just as a Congressman from Mississippi's Fourth Congressional District, but also as a Marine veteran of the Persian Gulf War and the only Member of this body that is currently serving as a noncommissioned officer in the National Guard, simply to say that one of the biggest threats to our national security that we face as a nation is the crippling defense cuts that would put our men and women in uniform at physical risk and more than 1 million Americans out of work.

It will harm folks like the 857th that I had the privilege to send off this weekend as they are about to deploy to Afghanistan, or the more than 170,000 warfighters from all across the United States who have come through the gates of Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center as part of the global war on terrorism.

Today, once more, I join my colleagues in asking the President and the Senate Democrats to come to the table, consider the solutions we've already brought forth, or propose your own. The American people deserve answers on how these defense cuts will affect them, and American soldiers deserve leadership from their Commander in Chief.

AMERICAN COMPASSION FOR HIV/AIDS

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Next week, more than 20,000 delegates from around the world will convene in Washington for the International AIDS Conference.

I find it ironic and a little bit sad that, as so many mobilize to fight this deadly epidemic, the majority in this body want to cut \$150 million from USAID's global health initiative, which funds AIDS prevention efforts.

When will we learn? Fighting diseases in the developing world is more than a matter of humanitarian decency. It's also critical to our national security.

This week, as we debate how much money to appropriate to the Defense Department, I hope we will remember that defending America and our values isn't just about how many weapons we build, but how many lives we save around the world. This is the core truth behind my SMART Security proposal, that fighting terrorism and keeping our country safe depends less on American military force and more on American compassion.

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TAX HIKES

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)